IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 26, 35, and 47, as follows:

~~26~~ 27. (Twice Amended) The developing assembly according to claim ~~25~~ 26, further comprising a developer layer thickness control member for forming a thin [layer of the] developer layer on an outer surface of said developer carrying member.

~~35~~ 63. (Twice Amended) The image forming apparatus according to claim ~~34~~ 62, further comprising a developer layer thickness control member for forming a thin [layer of the] developer layer on an outer surface of said developer carrying member.

~~47~~ 102. (Twice Amended) The process cartridge according to claim ~~46~~ 101, further comprising a developer layer thickness control member for forming a thin [layer of the] developer layer on an outer surface of said developer carrying member.

Please add Claims 126-138, as follows:

~~126~~ 25. The developer carrying member according to claim 1, wherein said conductive spherical particles are produced by firing spherical resin particles having surfaces that are coated with bulk-mesophase pitch, thereby

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carbonizing and/or graphitizing the spherical resin particles.

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127. The developing assembly according to claim 26, wherein said conductive spherical particles are produced by firing spherical resin particles having surfaces that are coated with bulk-mesophase pitch, thereby carbonizing and/or graphitizing the spherical resin particles.

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128. The developing assembly according to claim 26, further comprising means for generating a vibrating electric field at the developing zone.

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129. The developing assembly according to claim 60, further comprising a power source for applying an alternating bias voltage to said developer carrying member.

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130. The developing assembly according to claim 27, wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on said outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between an electrostatic latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone.

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131. The developing assembly according to claim 27, further comprising means for generating a vibrating

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electric field at the developing zone, wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on said outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between an electrostatic latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone.

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~~132.~~ The image forming apparatus according to claim 62 ~~34~~, wherein said conductive spherical particles are produced by firing spherical resin particles having surfaces that are coated with bulk-mesophase pitch, thereby carbonizing and/or graphitizing the spherical resin particles.

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~~133.~~ The image forming apparatus according to claim 62 ~~34~~, further comprising means for generating a vibrating electric field at the developing zone.

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~~134.~~ The image forming apparatus according to claim 99 ~~133~~, further comprising a power source for applying an alternating bias voltage to said developer carrying member.

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~~135.~~ The image forming apparatus according to claim 63 ~~35~~, wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on said outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between said ~~an electrostatic~~ latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone.

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~~136.~~ The developing assembly according to claim 63, ~~35,~~ further comprising means for generating a vibrating electric field at the developing zone, wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on an outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between said ~~an electrostatic~~ latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone.

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~~137.~~ The process cartridge according to claim 101, ~~46,~~ wherein said conductive spherical particles are produced by firing spherical resin particles having surfaces that are coated with bulk-mesophase pitch, thereby carbonizing and/or graphitizing the spherical resin particles.

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~~138.~~ The process cartridge according to claim 102, ~~47,~~ wherein a thickness of the developer layer formed on said outer surface of said developer carrying member is smaller than a minimum gap between said ~~an electrostatic~~ latent image bearing member and said developer carrying member, which form the developing zone.--.

REMARKS

Claims 1-32, 34-44, 46-55, and 57-138 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 25, 34, and 46 being independent. Claims 26, 35, and 47 have been amended, while Claims 126-138 are newly presented.

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